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Price, 10 Cents.

"What fools these Mortals be!"
MIDSUMMER-NIGHTS DREAM.

Puck

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PUCK THANKS HIS FRIENDS.

But are not these presents just a little too inexpressible?

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PUCK'S ALMANAC—1878.

MR. PUCK has the honor to announce to his readers and the public that he has issued an Almanac for the year 1000000000000000000000008, according to Lyell and Darwin, but more popularly known as 1878.

Mr. Puck's almanac is the only reliable one ever published. It is a Bible, prayer-book, cyclopædia, and guide to poker in one volume, indeed is a library in itself, much less could a library be complete without it.

Unlike other works of this character, PUCK's Almanac will contain absolutely nothing new. It is the worst Almanac ever printed. Price 15 cents. For sale everywhere.

THE HUG OF THE BEAR.

RUSSIA of late has been rather sitting on the turbaned Turk. This was not unexpected despite the bravery of the Turkish troops. Heaven, as Napoleon said, is usually on the side of the heaviest artillery, and this campaign has proved no exception to the rule.

PUCK, as a right-thinking American citizen, has supreme contempt for both belligerents.

Turkey is wretchedly corrupt, and has reached the lowest depth of degradation as a nation.

Any sympathy between semi-barbarous Russia and civilized America is as much out of place, as good feeling between a wolf and a lamb.

Russia is the last country in the world that ought to presume to talk or act about freedom, after the atrocious cruelties perpetrated under the name of government on people who have the misfortune to be under her subjection.

Thus far has she gone in her aggressive march, and must go no further.

This Eastern question is to be settled by the great civilized powers of Europe—not by a brutal Nation which is justly detested and condemned by all mankind whose opinion is worth anything.

AND now three young men shall meet together on the midnight following the first day of the year, and one shall say unto the other: "Lo! I have called upon six score and five young maidens this day." And the other shall make answer and say: "Go to now, for I have seen thy six score and five and have gone it ten better." But the third man shall say nothing, nay, rather shall he ignore the subject and preach the gospel of snakes to them that listen.

SOMETHING must be done. Either we must have a new extra Fourth of July, or else some other system of decimation must be put into immediate execution. There is no skating so far this year, and no check whatever on the appalling growth and multiplication of the small boy.

WHEN one mania dies out, another travels in. Now they are having dancing matches one after another. They'll rush things until they've had a quadrillion, and then something else will waltz to the front.

Puckerings.

Now sprout diaries.

THE Baltimorean remarks: "the Old Year has left us, and now we have the New yere."

THE helmet hat was born ripe for shooting, and has no rights which an outraged populace is bound to respect.

BEECHER says it is not his fault that he go, into the Church. It is not his fault that he didn't get out of it long ago.

WHAT is it that weighs down our minds with an indefinite sense of gloom and melancholy? Is it that we are awaiting the solemn dawn of another year? Is it the result of the Christmas mince-pie?

'Tis Augustus Adolphus de Toots
 Writes down his New Year's resolutives.
 Ere the morrow is over,
 He'll wake to discover
 He meandered to bed in his boots.

He gave his youngest son a box of tools and a quart bottle of mucilage. And now he thinks it is his turn to treat himself. He is treating himself to a new carpet, a parlor table, several rolls of wall-paper, and a yard section of rattan.

ACCORDING to our brilliant contemporary, the *Sun*, ex-Governor Hayes of Ohio was present at the Union League Club reception. Has Christmas had the effect of softening Dana's heart or has that electrottype of Fraud been mislaid?

MR. VANDYKE, who was recently hanged at Canton, N. Y., for wife-murder, requested the sheriff to turn him off at eleven o'clock, in order that he might get to his destination in time for dinner. From this speech, and from the awful nature of the crime of which he was guilty, it is safe to infer that Vandyke had boarded.

"Look simply at the circulation of the blood," he said, "see what a wonderful light modern scientific analysis has thrown on the composition of those incalculably minute particles which we call the porcuscles—I mean the pro—the copruscles—the prucus—the copruscles—the—slash it all, boys, what'll you take?"

THE SECOND OF JANUARY.

Oh for the soothing of Seltzer Water!
 Oh for the blessing and balm of her!
 When D. T. is born of despair for a daughter,
 And mouth and tongue are as fire and fur.
 Come with wires loose in a bottomless bottle,
 Liquid most lovely, lemon or plain—
 All we stretch hands to thee, hail thee as what'll
 Save us and set us erect again.

SINCE the temperance reformers have undertaken the charge of public morality and private conscience, a fellow is under no obligations to make New Year's resolutions. But if the young man of the period wants to make his annual vows, the usual formula should be changed to read: "I hereby promise not to frequent back-yards, wood-sheds, coal-cellar or other gilded halls of vice and dissipation, during the year 1878."

OYSTER SALOON OF THE PERIOD.

VISITOR—"Half-shell Blue Points and a bottle of Lager."

WAITER (*with wink*)—"Shell Blue Points and a cupper corfee!"

THIS offspring exhibition business is having its demoralizing influence on the infancy of America. Scarcely has a young blossom grown old enough to give its parental sire a nickname, before it demands, in a lusty and emphatic yell, to be taken to the Baby-Show.

THE interior view of the late Mr. Vanderbilt, as afforded by the will-suit, was not, so to speak, entirely edifying. But the disemboweling of Cornelius J. on the witness-stand gives us an opportunity to remark that the latter gentleman does not pan out any better on spiritual than his father did on physical inwardness.

IS THERE A SANGUINARY PANDEMONIUM?

TRUE believers, at the present time, are much exercised as to the doubts that are being thrown on the existence of hell. Is this institution, the most fondly cherished of all our articles of belief, to be ruthlessly swept away?

Puck is not surprised that the pious souls, especially those of the Case and Gilman type, who have been so sedulously cultivating and developing the qualities necessary to secure them admission to the fire and brimstone headquarters, should become alarmed at the thought of being left out in the cold.

Now PUCK is too modest to take a prominent part in this discussion, although he knows of none more eminently fitted to set the matter at rest; but he has no objection just to tell what he knows about hell, provided that it will not be looked at as an interference with the gentlemen who are engaged in the church and religious business, whose special province it is to be posted in these things.

It is a source of deep sorrow to PUCK that he is compelled to differ from his dearly beloved brother Henry of Plymouth, who swears by several deities that there is no such place.

It is Pandemonium when you're about to dress for a reception where you are to meet Arabella, to find your washerwoman hasn't brought home your clean shirt.

It is Avernus when you're getting a five-cent shine in a retired street, with your trousers tucked up, to have the fashionable Mrs. Shoddy-whiskey sweep by with her darling Gwendoline, the heiress to old S-w's millions.

It is Tartarus when the thermometer is at zero, and you've a tolerably comfortable seat in a car, and have nothing but a five-dollar bill to pay your five cent fare with.

It is his Satanic Majesty to settle with, and not sufficient caloric in the pitch, when you've spent all your loose cash, live on a fifth floor flat, and have left your night-key in your old coat, remembering all these things when you reach your apartment house at 3 A. M., and find the outer street-door closed, and the prospect of a night's lodging in a police station or on the cold, cold ground.

It is particular Hades when you find that some fellow at a hat-check hop has walked off with your new overcoat, value fifty dollars, made to cut a figure on the Avenue, and left in its stead an old one, value five dollars.

It is Erebus when you come home to dinner, having purposely forgotten to purchase those theatre-tickets to take your wife to that wonderful play.

And, lastly, it is — and Blazes when you want a copy of Puck, and not one to be had at the news-stand for love or money.

RESOLUTIONS.

(BEING APPROPRIATE THINGS JUST ABOUT THIS TIME OF YEAR.)

THE man who resolves needs a day on which to begin resolving. It is for his especial benefit that New Year's day was instituted. But for him the arbitrary method of cutting every year down to 365 days would not have been thought of; for why shouldn't Time keep on straight ahead and add as many more days to the 365 as it feels like?

Why should the 1st of January, rather than the 32d of December, follow the last day of the last month?

Knowing then that New Year's day is the divine right of the man who resolves, how does this man employ the right? He resolves, of course. In fact he begins resolving as soon as he wakes up on New Year's morning, and resolves to continue resolving for the rest of the year.

Usually he abjures all further use of intoxicating beverages. Then he celebrates this resolution by coming home very early the next morning with his vest in his trousers and his necktie in his boots.

He then renews his resolution. Then he vows to himself that from this forth everlastingly, his fond and susceptible heart shall worship at the shrine of one fair beauty alone. All the sweets at which, like a soulless butterfly, he has been sipping for twelve months past, shall be sweet to him no more. But one fond image shall now be enthroned within his devoted bosom. But one pair of eyes—blue eyes (or are they brown?)—shall beam on him with that warm sunshine that moves the inner life to thoughts of lasting fervor.

Then he goes forth girt with this noble resolve, and pops the question to six distinct and different vestals, varying from ebony black to pale yellow. And when all six refuse him, he comes home and resolves over again; resolves forevermore to shun the baneful influence of woman's society, to ignore the very existence of the other sex; and not until he has made frantic efforts to enlist the sympathies of his washerwoman's daughter does he realize that he has got to begin resolving all over again.

Man is weak; but doubly weak is the man who resolves to be strong.

On the first day of the year, when the average youth strikes a balance-sheet, and finds that he has not yet paid a little debt which was contracted through an unfortunate game of poker, he will say to himself, "Augustus—" (that is, presupposing that his name is Augustus, and that he is on sufficiently familiar terms with himself to warrant this off-hand use of his Christian name,)—"Augustus, this will never do. You must stop this sort of thing; if you don't, where will it end?" And before he has time to satisfactorily answer this really perplexing conundrum, he will have accepted an invitation to an all-night party at a friend's house, where, with wild and vehement vigor, he will endeavor to bluff the crowd by betting seventy-five dollars on a bob-tail flush.

These are but a few illustrations of the resolutions that are formed every year. There is no limit to their variety; no fathomable depth to their earnestness.

In the beginning of the new year there are more new leaves turned over than were bound in all the volumes of a public library. If one man can't find a leaf of his own to turn over, he will turn another fellow's.

But there is no remedy for this thing; and perhaps there is none needed. It does very little harm to resolve on a good thing, even if the resolution gets no further than its inception. At all events, the man who resolves to reform doesn't generally grow worse, even if he fails to improve.

Let us render thanks for the birth of another year. The whirligig of time has brought us where we are, and if we were not here, where should we be? That is a question which, as we pause for a reply, makes us comparatively contented with our being.

We might be happier if many anxieties stirring our hearts were laid to rest; but Hope, which springs eternal in the human breast, takes a new lease of life as the New Year dawns, and paints in glowing colors legions of coming joys.

Therefore, if we must resolve, at this period of general resolution, let us resolve to wait; for that is a plan which is easily adhered to. Patience is a sweet virtue; and though it can't make two Saturday nights come in one week, it can teach us to wait seven days for the second one.

PUCK presumes that all his male acquaintances make their usual calls. He wishes them much pleasure, and, though his limited wardrobe prevents him from joining in the peripatetic pleasures of the day, he cherishes none the less the warmest feelings for his fair friends who receive, and will drink their health in his home with vigor and relish.

MY GRANDFATHER.

HE did not sign the Declaration of Independence, not merely because he could not write, but he was afraid he would be hung by the British. Like every other fellow's grandfather, he fought in the Revolution; but it was not his fault, for he was a very peaceable young man. His motto was: "Last in war, first in peace, first in the pockets of his countrymen." Not that he was afraid of the enemy; for in the middle of one cold winter's night he left the American camp all alone, and pierced his way into the very heart of the enemy's camp; here he gave himself up, and informed them of the intended movements of the Americans.

After the war he returned to his father's home in New Jersey, where he fell through the back-window of the bank one night; the next week he was apprenticed to the largest and best-patronized shoe manufactory in the State. It was called the New Jersey State Prison. He was only there six months when his apprenticeship expired and he came to New York.

He started as an advertising-agent. He meandered Broadway, dressed in Indian costume, with a sign in front and behind him, upon which was painted:

"A cup of coffee and a pair of dumbbells for five cents, at No. 10 Delmonico Alley."

For this he got his meals. But it was not his meals that worried him; it was his great thirst. Like a good many others, he could drink more than he could pay for.

When he was living at home, the neighbors got tired of having him ring their door-bells in the middle of the night, in mistake for his own, so they put poison into the well which furnished water for his house. My grandfather saved his life by remaining steadfast to a solemn pledge, taken in his youth, to abstain from the use of water for drinking purposes, except when its injurious effects were offset by mixing it with whiskey, or some other reliable beverage.

I have often heard the story of my grandfather's death and his dying words. He was living in Centre, corner of Leonard Street, at the time. All his friends, knowing that he could not live much longer, had gathered around him. A gentleman who seemed to be the owner of the house, with the assistance of two others, took him into the yard, where had been erected a platform for my grandfather, to enjoy the air. He asked him if he did not have something to say to his family before he should die. He answered:

"Not guilty."

Just then the platform upon which he was standing gave way, on account of a rope breaking by which it was in some way connected. My grandfather was killed by the fall. Some of the people said it served the old cuss right. He had no business to throw the spittoon at the man.

WHERE TO GO IN THE EVENINGS.

FROM A RECENT REAL CITY TRAGEDY.

JUDGE—"Now, young man, I sentence you to twenty years of hard labor in State Prison for killing that man with a cart-rung. It'll be a warning to other young men who spend their evenings in bar-rooms not to go to such vile places."

OTHER YOUNG MAN—"Please, sir, where shall we go?"

JUDGE—"Go to Church."

OTHER YOUNG MAN—"What, every evening? And they're not open either."

JUDGE—"Well, go—go to some respectable theatre."

OTHER YOUNG MAN—"Can't afford it, Judge."

JUDGE—"Well go—go—to a dime concert."

OTHER YOUNG MAN—"What shall we do the other five week evenings?"

JUDGE—"Go—go—go see some respectable young ladies."

OTHER YOUNG MAN—"They want oysters, ice-cream and theatre tickets, Judge. Can't afford 'em on \$7 a week."

JUDGE—"Well go—go go—go to your rooms and study, and become a judge like me."

ANY OTHER YOUNG MAN—"Judge, it's tough work studying after working all day. Did you get to be a Judge by studying?"

JUDGE—"Why, yes, of course."

OTHER YOUNG MAN—"Studying what?"

JUDGE—"Politics, of course—No—I mean I studied readin', ritin', arithmetic and law."

ANY OTHER YOUNG MAN—"Yes, Judge. Where do you spend your evenings, Judge?"

JUDGE—"Well, I generally dine at the Club, and then take a run around town, drop in at a theatre, and at the Fifth Avenue, or a beer-tunnel, and sometimes I take a spin around the corner at ****, or up to ****—stop; what am I saying? Young man, I spend my virtuous evenings in the bosom of my virtuous family, and retire at ten to my virtuous spring bedstead."

OTHER YOUNG MAN—"Well, Judge, we can't afford those luxuries until we are elected judges. Wish you'd tell us where to go evenings?"

JUDGE—"Go—go—go—go to the devil!"

ALL THE OTHER YOUNG MEN—"Yes, Judge, we're going there."

ART NOTES.

— Among the pictures at the next exhibition we may reasonably expect the following: "A Flour-piece," by Miller; "Selling Off," by Boughton; "A Head," by Tait; "I cannot tell a lie," by Story.

— We hope the annual exhibition of the National Academy of Design will be as good this year as last. Even then there were some pictures hung on the line bad enough to entitle the painter to be hanged at the end of one.

— There is at the Metropolitan Museum of Art a collection of lace, but it is mostly old and not on a level with modern ideas. What we want to see is Mrs. Twombly's stocking, with the lace on the instep as it appears after the wearer has been out shopping for two hours and a half on a snowy day in January.

DUMB DEVOTION.

THERE'S a darling girl I know of, whom make
 show off would I durst,
 But to bore her, no adorer can come o'er her, last
 or first,
 She is sweetest and completest, and the meetest for my
 muse,
 Wild I'd be too, should she 'gree to answer yes, if I
 should choose;
 But 'tis futile, naught I'll do till I've completed every
 plan
 Which I've thought out, madly sought out, till I've
 wrought out all I can;
 And, O glory! Happy story! Dilatory though it be,
 I've a clue to—I'll tell you, too—make her true to
 only me.

She's a notion that devotion fills the souls of lower mutes,
 From her feeling, love revealing, doting, dealing with
 dumb brutes;
 I've concluded that though you did, sore deluded, strive
 fore'er,
 Human sinner—if you'd win her, you her inner thoughts
 must share.

So I've plighted, all delighted, my benighted heart to
 brutes,
 And I pray that soon she'll say that such the way that
 true love suits,
 For, if need be, e'er I freed be, I should worship with
 true art,
 E'en a sea-li'n, dog or feline. 'Tis the bee-line to
 her heart!

For *that* heart, I'd almost offer—smile you scoff—
 though you may
 (Man is some brute) e'en a dumb brute to become myself,
 for aye,

Is it wasted Love untasted that's to human kind denied?
 Ah, perhaps so, but a chap's so full of rhapsody of pride,
 That to know is consolation, in man's station still doth
 dwell

Many a poodle who's a noodle not worth loving half
 so well.

SYDNEY ROSENFELD.

"POPULAR FALLACIES."

"BIRDS IN THEIR LITTLE NESTS AGREE."

WHAT a pity it is that the author of the
 above named essays is not alive now!
 I wonder if his Sunday-school teacher
 ever taught him to repeat that pretty hymn,
 the first line of which heads my chapter! If
 she did, I suppose she believed it for a fact,
 and he accepted it as such on her authority,
 whereas the advancement in social science
 proves it to be a lie. Neither in nor out of
 their little nests do birds agree without a great
 amount of preparatory discipline. Nevertheless
 it may be as well that the masses should be de-
 ceived. The masses are not yet educated up
 to the highest truths. Little gratitude do the
 pioneers of progress receive in their day and
 generation. But they have the satisfaction of
 martyrdom. Without the law of compensation
 how wretched would be the fate of philan-
 thropists and divers in the ocean of truth. We
 are in danger of erring on the side of too great
 sympathy, we, I mean who wait to be enlight-
 ened and instructed generally. We take for
 granted they have a hard time of it, their guard-
 ians of public morality, reporters, dramatic
 and other critics who feel called upon to dis-
 sect so many disagreeable subjects, and expose
 so many wicked things, and lay bare the im-
 morality which the generality of people never
 would discover unless it was distinctly pointed
 out and defined. I am convinced that sym-
 pathy is thrown away on them. I feel sure they

have a good time. If we know anything about
 human nature, we know how easy it is to pick
 flaws, but when one is educated up to it,
 especially if one has his living to get by it, and
 is well paid, why it becomes a second nature.
 And the reward is worth striving for. Every
 stone which removed, destroys some poor crea-
 ture's reputation, goes to the upbuilding of the
 destroyer. Every hidden vice dragged into
 notice, looks a thousandfold more hideous, in
 contrast with its opposite virtue for which of
 course the dissector of personal morals is con-
 spicuous.

Still I repeat the assertion, which I intended
 to make before, although I may have forgotten
 to do so in my anxiety to be as concise as pos-
 sible in order to secure attention, that for the
 preservation of public morality and the sanctity
 of domestic relations it is better that the mass
 of people should believe an attractive lie than
 to be awakened to an unwholesome truth. For
 this reason I do not write for the masses. I
 wish I could believe that all the twitterings and
 wooings I overhear in the Park and elsewhere
 meant eternal constancy, mutual confidence,
 conjugal felicity and all that sort of thing. But
 I know it does not. If the bird feminine picks
 at the bird masculine, it means fight, and as
 she is given to that sort of endearment, I am
 justified in believing that birds in their little
 nests so far from agreeing, quarrel a great part
 of the time. I don't think they are ever divorced
 except by death. I do know that when he has
 endured her pecking as long as he can, and
 until he has lost some of his most beautiful
 feathers (and by the way how few people ob-
 serving these appendages lying loose, ever dream
 how they got there), he takes to his wings and
 is off. And I know another fact which I feel
 called upon to make public, for the good of my
 sisters in affliction. Mrs. Bird never follows
 her Mr. Bird to find out where he goes for
 sympathy. She has the right spirit for it. She
 doesn't care where he goes. Suppose she should
 do some disguise, in the shape of a large leaf,
 as the human bird clothes herself in the ever
 ready and waiting water-proof, and under cover
 of the night, or the leaf if it be large enough
 set off to follow her truant mate. She must be
 a simpleton to think for a moment that is the
 way to win him back. She knows better. She
 devotes herself assiduously to her domestic af-
 fairs. There may be exceptions to this as to
 every rule. If any bird feminine is so foolish
 as to go off in such a wild goose chase, when
 she returns she will assuredly find Mr. Bird at
 home, with an injured and bereaved look feed-
 ing the birdlings, as though it were possible for
 him to neglect his parental obligations. What
 is the result? She is filled with remorse. But
 he is magnanimous. He forgives her for being
 away from home, forgives her for doubting
 him, forgives her everything but plucking out
 his feathers.

In conclusion what moral can be educed
 from a knowledge of these facts which will help
 on the wheels of progress? To those who pre-
 fer to slumber on the ignorance of innocence,
 we can only say, slumber on. To any mis-
 chievous person who desires in the cause
 of truth and virtue to awake them, we say
 don't do it, it is unkind, it is cruel. To the
 advance guard in progress who are on the
 alert to make new discoveries and to unmask
 the old traditions, what can we advise but to
 go ahead. So the doubting and wavering who
 would fain cling to youth's sweet romance and
 illusion we say, do so if you can. To those
 who desire to get at the truth at all hazards we
 declare emphatically that birds in their little
 nests do not agree until one or the other is
 broken into submission. Mr. Bird, after the
 loss of his best suit, made no further resistance.
 The result is Mr. and Mrs. Bird agree very well.

S. W. J.

FITZNOODLE IN AMERICA.



XXXIX.

YA-AS, aw this aw
 place is doosid
 good fun. The fel-
 laws who twy to
 govern Amerwica
 afford me maw we-
 cweation than any
 othah aw arwange-
 ments in this we-
 public. Verwy
 queer, yer know,
 they make a wegu-
 lar business of the thing—just as if aw they were
 carpenters, or gwooms, or lawyers, or doctors,
 or gwocers, or bootblacks, or pwofessional
 wobblers, or some othah twade, yer know. The
 fellows who are members of the Amerwican
 Lords and Commons—although, by the way,
 they are not pwoper lords and are terwibly
 common; all weceive salarwies for aw wepwes-
 senting the aw people. Now this is weally
 too widiculous. How can any fellow have
 wespect for a pwivate fellow who has to get his
 meat and dwink, and coats and twousers by
 sitting in the Amerwican Parliament. Jack
 Carnegie says it's wather degwading to get a
 living in this way, and fellows who do it must
 be verwy bad form and can't have the good of
 the countwy much at heart if they have to
 weceive wemuneration for being patwiotic.

Wonder what my old gweat-gwandfathers or
 aw even some of my pwesent welations, who,
 of course, sit in the Lords, would say if they
 knew there was an aw countwy where they gave
 cash and aw gweenbacks to fellows to wepwes-
 sent them.

The Amerwican Emperwor, who is called a
 Pwesident, lives in some kind of a dwelling
 called the Whitewashed House. Jack Carnegie
 says it has this verwy peculiar aw name because
 no fellow can take a lodgng in it unless he has
 been aw whitewashed—doosid odd, by Jove.

I've been intwoduced to this aw Pwesident.
 He seems an ordinarwy kind of fellow and is—
 haw! haw! it's weally too widiculous—a tem-
 perwance fellow—doesn't dwink anything, yer
 know, except sodah-watah and sloppy milk
 arwagements. Now, no fellow who wefuses to
 take wine or spirwits can be a gentleman—it
 shows aw doosid bad bweedng.

The Whitewashed House doesn't bear a
 verwy stwong wesemblance to Buckingham
 Palace, Balmorwal or Windsor Castle—but then
 aw what can be expected from Amerwicans and
 a wepublic?

The Pwesident fellow only lives thwee or four
 years in it, and then changes wound, just as a
 Lord Mayor or some aw fellows in the vestwy
 do sometimes.

There's a tolerwably large building he-ah
 called a p-p-p-patent office. It's wather bewil-
 derwing to stwoll thwough it. Such a lot of
 gimcwacks, constwucted of varwious descwip-
 tions of materwials. Don't quite understand
 how Amerwicans could have the bwains to
 think of all this apparwatus—but I almost
 agwee with Jack that there is aw just a fair
 amount of intelligence among them, attwibut-
 able, no doubt, to their being distantly welated
 to Gweat Bwitain and aw speaking English.

I shall aw at some othah time have more
 wemarks to make with weference to the fellows
 in the Amerwican Parliament and othah cur-
 wious things in Washington.

An exchange states that "Bayard Taylor is
 preparing a fresh version of Schiller's drama
 'Don Carlos' for Lawrence Barrett." If Mr.
 Taylor knows his man, he *will* make that a fresh
 version—just about as fresh as possible.

THE GREAT BATTLE OF WORDS.

AT mid-day, in the City Hall,
The Mayor sat dreaming of the hour
When men on bended knee would fall,
And tremble at his power.
In dreams came up his younger days,
'Mid ballot-stuffers, all unawed
In dreams, he saw by devious ways
Himself a President of fraud.

An hour passed on—the Mayor awoke;
That bright dream now was past.
He woke to hear his minions shriek:
"To arms!—they come!—the Men with
Cheek!"
He woke—to hear in tones that choke:
"Invading State are men dead-broke,
Book-agents coming fast."

The Mayor paled, as now was heard
The nearing sound of distant word;
And messengers, with looks aghast,
Brought news that men were falling fast.
"Call out the troops!" the Mayor cried,
"The Riot Act read far and wide!"
Alas, the troops were far away,
Striking down men who struck for pay;
And hopes of home defence now faded,
The guard had left the State when raided.

Where now was leader to command,
And drive th' invader from the land?
The man was there—his name was Todd—
An agent for a Lightning Rod;
And striding nobly forth, he stood
A warrior—in the fight for food.
"Call out Home Agents! I will head
This hungry band in search of bread.
'Tis self-protection nerves the blow;
We'll drive away this foreign foe."
The Mayor's heart bounced up with joy,
"Give me your paw," he cried, "old boy;
This day art thou enshrined in place
Of Lincoln, Washington and Chase."
And like the nose of Cronin's, odd,
The Mayor's shone—he loved his Todd.

A motley gang was soon enroled,
Their cheeks immense, their manner bold,
Well armed with tongues quite gay and frisky,
And freshly primed with gin and whiskey;
In three battalions did they form,
First Lightning men were there to storm;
Then agents of machines for sewing,
Selected for their skillful blowing;
While last, not least, came men of books,
Who volumes spoke—to judge by looks.
No brass-band needed they to brag,
Nor banners, for they never flag.
Now marched they forward to the fray
With fiendish grin and step so gay,
And like war-horses sniffed the air;
No quarter gave—they'd none to spare.

Like swarms of Kansas hoppers black,
That the green meadows fair attack,
Was seen afar the coming host.
At doors, at windows, by gate-post,
On kitchen-steps, on ladders reared
To second floors, the foe appeared;
And some were even on the roof,
Talking down chimneys—fire-proof.

The enemy, who now were met
By men whose tongues had just been wet,
Stopped suddenly their child-like prattle,
And quickly formed in line of battle.

When cheek meets cheek, then comes the tug
of war;
The wordy battle opened with a roar.

The Lightning men, who led the van, ad-
vanced,
And from their tongues their wit in flashes
glanced,
"Spare not the rod" their war-cry, and they
showered
Their brassy hail upon the foe, nor cowered.
Their wind was hurricane; they wildly stormed,
And clouds of steam showed to the fight they'd
warmed.
Their batteries played; but they displayed in
vain—
Not one returned; each Lightning man was
slain.

"Forward the Sewing Machines!" Now
lightly run
The Iron Kings, each armed with needle-gun:
"While others sew, we reap," their battle-
cry;
But like their brethren they were doomed to
die.
'Twas nip and tuck, ere long their breath was
wasted,
Hemmed in on all sides, they were quickly
basted.

A moment's truce a shirt of white proclaimed,
Though fiery spirits were as yet untamed;
The ground was thickly strewn with cold grim
death,
And time was wanted on both sides for breath,
And time to bury their respective dead;
So during minutes five no word was said.

Now truce was ended, and the Book Reserve
Marched sternly forward with firm tread and
nerve,
For now on these the city's fate must rest;
To do or die!—they did their level best.
O men of cheek! your courage now decides
Our lives, our stamps, our homes, our dear fire-
sides.
May words be put into your mouths, to do
The business for your foes—and likewise you.

The battle, now renewed, waxed fierce and
hot;
What had got hot now hotter got a lot,
And, though before had sounds of thunder
rolled,
The volume now increased a hundred-fold.
As mouth to mouth they battled to the death,
In horrid gasps came, quick and short, their
breath,
Their stock of ammunition was immense,
As all must know—who know the Book a-gentz.

The sun was gone—and now had peaceful night
The curt: in drawn, in shame, to hide from sight
This high-toned warfare; yet were ears op
pressed
By sounds of tumult, though the eye had rest;
The frightened Moon 'neath fleecy clouds
peeped out,
"My Stars!" she said, "what is this noise
about?"

Now inky blackness did the scene enshroud,
But still were voices heard—though not so
loud.

It was the morning. And the sun, blood-red,
Rose angrily, and viewed the field of dead;
Of those who saw him set but few remained,
And many a pool of blood the heather stained,
In horrid piles the ghastly corpses lay,
Their tongues at rest, we hope, till judgment
day.

A haggard remnant, wan and short of breath,
Still talked and gestured—undeterred by death.
None but Book Agents could such talk have
done,
And even they were dropping one by one.

At last but two remain—and one was Todd.
A struggle now 'tween Books and Lightning
Rod.

O Todd! thy duty do. Thy country's fate
Hangs on thy tireless tongue's sustained gait.
Despair! Despair! The Lightning Rod gives
way,

The greater weight of Books has won the day.
But victory, dearly bought, doth naught avail,
For, tongue protruding, hair on end, and pale,
The victor droops, then drops, and faintly
crowing,
Gives up the ghost—
But still his mouth keeps going.

In the calm church-yard, now, these brave
men lie;
Who in their lives the truth but seldom told;
And very late at night the passer-by,
As stroke of twelve is from the church-clock
tolled,
May see a spectral agent—never slowing.

And as the goblin flits from grave to grave,
And wierdly waves his arms in gestures horrid,
While taking names from tomb-stone and from
pave,
And showing eyeless sockets 'neath his fore-
head,
His voiceless mouth keeps going—ever going.

Monument to those who yielded up their
breath,
Rises a simple shaft marked, "Talked to
Death."

H. C. DODGE.

NEWSPAPER NOTES.

— The *Scientific American* makes Munny.

— They have a paper in London called the
Quiver, but it is no great shakes.

— Mr. Cutter publishes the *Bulletin* of the
Boston Athenæum. His name qualifies him for
the editor of the *Toledo Blade*.

— The *Library Table* has greatly improved
of late. Some of its best work is done by Mr.
Frothingham in the intervals between his inven-
tion of new religions.

— The editor of the *Sun* declares that one
report that his collection of roosters had been
stolen from their plate-glass palace is a base in-
vention of the henemy.

— So far as we know there is only one
paper in these United States which is honest
enough to call itself the *Clipper*. But the
editor of many another has taken for his motto,
"aut scissors, aut nullus."

— The *New York World* publishes every
Monday an article on colleges; but has as yet
made no mention of Trinity College, Dublin.
Is not this unworthy jealousy of the Intellectual
Department of the *New York Herald*?

PUCK is by far the best exponent of Ameri-
can wit and humor ever published. It is not a
"comic" paper; the reader does not laugh at
it, but enjoys a satisfying smile with it. Its
paragraphic "Puckerings" are very bright, its
cartoons are excellent.—*Worcester Press*.

We don't, ourselves, know the publication
referred to—never heard of it. But we place
the utmost confidence in the opinion of our
esteemed friend, and shall always consider it
our duty to do anything in our power to for-
ward the interests of the deserving paper it
alludes to. Where is it published, anyway?

A QUADRUPEDAL QUODLIBET.



1. "If you have lost your appetite, you might at least hand us out that bit of cheese."



2. "We can't complain of our physical comforts, but what we need is intellectual amusement."

"Ah, my dear sir, it's the way of the world; we are not appreciated until after we are dead."



3. "That fellow's luck beats anything."



4. "The old saying certainly does apply to my friend Polly. Language is used to conceal thought."

Answers for the Anxious.

SWEET.—By and by.

HASELTINE.—She knows her own mind.

F. I. C.—Much obliged. The lines are very clever.

J. W. F.—Your verses are just good enough to make it necessary that they should be better.

ASPER.—Suppose you sit on your genius—or, if you don't like that way of putting it, we will advise you to treat the article to a course of systematic abseesion.

NED SCUPPER.—Ten men, selected from the attendants at the Morgue, men used to terrible sights and scenes of anguish, have been deputed to read your last sketch. They will soon report.

BARNABY.—Much obliged for the paragraphs. But we are only human. We are born with enough awful responsibilities on our mortal shoulders, and we don't mean to add another to these by letting those jokes of yours loose on a peaceable world.

J. W. McK.—It may be an artistic method which appeals to your own particular taste, this little idea of capturing a small and doubtful joke, which might be expressed diffusely in ten words, and setting it in four foolscap pages of very light verse—it may suit you, we admit, but it isn't a style popular with editors.

PHITZ.—We are sorry to say that this last assortment of paragraphs is not as good as the others with which you have previously favored us. Those were really good, and we take the liberty of suggesting that when a man once does a clever thing, he ought to be very careful never to do anything less clever.

LILL.—We see unlimited possibilities of happiness in your future, if you will but grasp them now. A blooming maiden—a happy bride—a fond wife and a beloved mother—a revered grandmother—all these bright potentialities are yours, if you will only conquer *now* this wild and abnormal desire to write sentimental verses. Tear up all the stock you have on hand at present. The eleven poems you have sent us will not be counted against you. They are buried from human sight in our oblivious wastebasket.

BROOKLYN.—Ascend to the top of the lofty bridge-tower that overlooks your native village, and then jump—but no. That wouldn't kill a man like you. Live and be happy, if you can, in the reflection that you are the only man living who ever had the clear cheek to send us paragraphs cut from an amateur programme, and stolen at that.

W. G. R.—You want your answer promptly? Then, with all the fiery impetuosity of our uncurbable spirit, we hasten to cry “no!”—a thousand times “no!” Take your gentle muse into a Chinese laundry and have her starched and ironed. Then turn her out into some meadow of airy, fairy thought, and let her graze; but don't, Mr. W. G. R., please don't ever try to write humorous verses about unpaid wash-bills again. That is a painful subject, and barren even to the most fruitful intellects.

PUSSIE.—Your flattering note, coming simultaneously with the advent of the Cat-Show, has touched our felines. (That was not done purrpuessly, however.) To oblige you, we will gladly plunge into the mysterious gloom of unwritten history, and raise the veil of darkness long enough to tell you that the Man in the Iron Mask was the Individual who struck Billy Patterson. For your second epistle, and for your interesting improvement on Shakspeare, which we print below, you have our thanks.

PUCK'S FARO BANK.

I know the Bank to which young Wild Thyme goes—
There Olip and the nodding Violet chose
To play at Faro once with Lush Woodbine,
The gay Musk Roses and Miss Eglantine.
Comes Dame Titania some time of the night
To try her luck, and sweepeth with delight
The glittering spoils into her purse of skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap her roubles in.

PUSSIE.

PUCK'S
HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.

CHAPTER XXI.

INDUSTRY OF THE CABINET.—THE SOUTH SCREWS UP ITS CHIVALRY TO A POINT WHERE IT DOESN'T STICK.—BUCHANAN FLABBERGASTED.—“DAT'S WHAT'S DE MATTER, YAH!”—WRONG STATES AND STATE RIGHTS.—PITCHING INTO THE TARIFF.—NOT THE MISSING LINK-UN.

The circus that had now commenced astonished and excited everybody, but the Cabinet at Washington were so busily engaged in drawing their salaries and figuring how they would make ends meet when they and their friends would have to retire into the bracing atmosphere of opposition, that the volatile Southerners had things pretty much their own way.

Their chivalry found full play. As to settling the matter, as was mildly suggested by some individuals who labored under the impression that they were influential, that wasn't entertained for a single instant. “Avaunt! quit my sight! base minion of a mercenar-r-r-y people; leave my countr-r-r-y and let me thr-r-rash my own niggers,” said the South to the North, and its bosom heaved like a first-class earthquake with full head of steam on.

Buchanan came to the conclusion that nothing in the Constitution completely covered this erratic movement on the part of the South; besides he didn't remember bargaining for anything of the kind in his letter of acceptance, and consequently he experienced no poignant grief when the time came for him to make room for Lincoln at the White House.

Puck hitherto has sought, in this veracious history, to confine himself to facts—but as some of them may not prove so pleasant as they might be he will occasionally mix them with a few profound reflections, just as Jersey lightning is diluted with water to soften its fiery qualities.



DE CAUSE OB DE TROUBLE.

All this approaching trouble was through the black brother and man. Of him and his black-kin, who thought they ever, ever should be slaves, there were six hundred and fifty thousand in the South in 1793. An enterprising statistician counted them in 1860 and discovered that there were four millions and two. Writers of the period say that there were four millions only, but Puck is nothing if not correct, and being a great deal, must of necessity be right in his estimate. So he's not going to take the two off to please anybody.

The cotton-gin, which, by the way, must not be confounded with gin cocktails, was a machine invented to separate cotton-seed from fibre a few years before the present century set up business for itself. There was a little prejudice against using for manufacturing fabrics the cotton-seed and fibre together—trifling, it is true, but still a prejudice. The gin overcame this difficulty. Slave-labor was very much in request—and that is the reason niggers increased

and multiplied, thereby accounting for the San Francisco minstrels and shoo-fly.

Northern people were more pious than were their dear brethren of the South. They read the Bible, and, although they couldn't with a microscope discover any passage that disapproved of slavery, they knew it was a sort of arrangement that—well, that they didn't like. There were grave doubts, though, about the meaning of the verse which says that a man shall leave his father and mother-in-law and cleave unto his wife. Some maintained that this absolutely countenanced slavery, while others as stoutly argued that if a fellow was commanded to leave his mother-in-law it meant that he wasn't to be a slave. This is still a vexed question. Much has been urged pro and con without any satisfactory conclusion being arrived at.

The principle of State Rights also waltzed to the front in the general mixedupness of things.

South Carolina, believing in this doctrine, harangued the greater number of the Sister States, and spoke somewhat as follows:

I guess I'm one of this family, and if I don't like the way I'm treated I reckon I'm big enough to set up an establishment on my own account. I'd like to know what's to prevent me. I ain't going to be kept tied to apron-strings all my life—it's unnatural; besides I came into this family of my own accord, and I shall go out of it when I please. These are State rights, and I don't want any State wrongs.”

A few people may have heard of something called a Tariff. Those who haven't will be obliged to find out all about it, for Puck is not going to tell them what it is. Puck's Almanac for 1878, price fifteen cents, for sale everywhere, may perhaps throw light on the subject. But to return to our Tariff. The outcome of Northern intellect and brains was represented in sewing-machines, clothes-pins, wooden nutmegs, clocks that wouldn't go, cast-iron razors, and baked beans, which articles did not go down with consumers as well as they might have done; although the manufacturers took care that the foreign article should not be allowed to come in unless Uncle Sam exacted a duty equal to its value. This riled the proud spirit of the chivalrous Southron—not the crushed, who wanted to know by what right of man or beast he couldn't exchange his 'baccy, rice, cotton and sugar for European high-toned manufactures without being obliged to bolster up the Yankee in his business of making cotton-cloths, and selling them for wool or snide umbrellas, and pins warranted to turn inside out and bend the first time used.



SIX OF ONE AND HALF A DOZEN OF THE OTHER.

Thus it will be seen that there were as lively a kettle of fish and supply of combustibles and burstupables as could well be desired. What with Tariff, Slavery and State Rights, here was programme enough for an unlimited run of the emotional drama, of which the Sumter business might be considered the overture. The hour and the man had come. He was not the missing Lincoln—at least so Darwin said when he heard of it.

(To be continued.)

PUCK.





A NEW YEAR'S STUDY.
MIDGETS IN THE HAND OF TIME.

THE CAT-SHOW.

HERE is a certain element of attraction in a Baby-Show.

It is morbid, perhaps, but it is solid, and may be relied on by speculative managers.

A Colored-Baby Show may, possibly does, afford a certain stimulus to the mental system. There is an indefinable subtle influence, outside of its material flavor, emanating from a mulatto pickaninny, which very likely is calculated to lift the soul of man into a region of holier and higher aspirations.

The Baby Show, plain or fancy, has, no doubt, its value as a social factor. It might be argued that, viewing the idea in this light, an exhibition of parents would be more effective; but this is merely going into superfluous detail.

Let us grant that the Infantile Exposition is a big thing.

But where is it alongside of a Cat-Show? Nowhere.

There you have the baby—the mother—the pap-bottle—and that is all.

Your baby can lie on its back and howl—it can put its big toe into its mouth—it can say ga-ga—and, sometimes, it can look just like its papa.

But that is all. Where, in a Baby-Show, can you catch the delicate but all-pervading odor of back-fencity? Where is the tender, wierd music of the feline sonata? Where is the hallowed halo of venerable associations which hangs about the head of an animal with whom for uncounted centuries superstition has associated the idea of a ninefold existence? Show us your baby that can lick the small of its own back—and does it, too, from motives of personal pride.

Talk about your triplets! Why, triplets are a joke—a positive diversion—to any well-regulated Cat. We knew a Cat, a Cat of comparatively domestic habits, a Cat rather averse, if anything, to the social observances of the roof-tree, a Cat of a certain age, who had been disillusioned, whose life was no more filled with the fresh ardor of youth—and that Cat had quintuplets.

Yes, and three of them got drowned, all the same.

There is a Cat-Show going on at the American Museum.

The American Museum has also a Fat Woman who is simply, looked at in a saponaceous light, an outrageous waste of crude material; a Living Skeleton who is about as cheerful and amusing as a London burlesque, and who shows considerably less leg; a scorbutic negro kid, supposed to be a calico variety of Ethiop and a smell that is well up to the standard of a first-class menagerie.

There is no menagerie: the visitors have to take it out in aroma.

The Cats are up stairs, in cages, with an insufficient depth of sawdust on the bottoms.

The first cage that the feline amateur encounters is the domicile of Tom and Jerry.

These names are given in hollow mockery to a pair of Arctic Cats. They are yellow and small and precisely alike. In fact such is the similarity that they do not know each other apart. Tom, in carrying out his own ideas on the subject of cleanliness, frequently licks over a large superficial area of Jerry, before discovering his identity. When he does, however, he enlightens Jerry on that point.

Talking of Arctic Cats, there is a Pole Cat in the Exposition. It is labeled Civet, and the visitors have a way of poking at it with their umbrellas. Some day that congregation will bury their clothes in the back-yard and wish they hadn't neglected the study of Natural History.

There are two electric kittens in a cage over an electric battery. They tell fortunes. The

visitor takes hold of the handles of the electric machine and receives a shock. Meanwhile the kittens slumber. Then the visitor pays ten cents, and gets a printed slip of paper. If he looks honest, however, the man who runs the machine will give him the paper before he strikes him for the ten cents. The slip of paper contains something like the following. There is no chromo given with it:

Your star is in the ascendent, and will shine brightly. You think of important things, and will receive news by which you may overcome your enemies. The rest of your life will be without any adversity. The star that destined the moment of your birth, is very changeable. Your star tells us about your unsteady and passionate character; you have no patience to wait for a better situation; you do not know the dangers of your passion, but you will give everything to those whom you think is most worthy of it; but you always have the intention to succeed with your business.

This makes the visitor feel cheerful.

Another attraction of the Cat-Show is the original Cat who was punned upon. This is the cat who suggested Cat-alepsy, Cat-astrophe, Cat-egorical and all the other atrocities. This Cat has a subdued and crushed appearance.

There are other Cats of scarcely less interest. There is a Cat with five legs, and a Cat with two paws on one leg. There is, however, no leg with five Cats, and no Cat with two legs on one paw.

The subject of Cats has suggested the following beautiful poem:

Arise, my mews, and sing
A most peculiar thing,
The first of Cat-Shows!
We have had Baby-Shows,
Both straight and Mulattoes,*
We have had Shows of cloes^{ts}
And may be Hat Shows.

Ay! you may hammer on
Your old Decameron,
Messer Bocaccio.
But longtime you may wait,
Ere given by kind fate
Such tales to celebrate
As are in that Show.

There, where a German band
Beside the door doth stand,
And plays *il Bacio*,
Each Cat smells in her mean hut
The permeating peanut,
Which viand, if it be nut,
Be not pistachio.

Why are there such shows, why?
I paws for a reply—
At best a flat show—
Where Cats their woes rehearse,
And Kitten worse and worse
Make dog-grell of my verse,
Oh, darn a Cat-Show! M. E. W. S.

* Emphasize the last syllable, please.



CHILDHOOD'S QUERY.

MILLY (just returned from a visit to her grandmother,) "Mama, what do you want a mama for? You're too big to put in the closet."



DRAMATIC NOTES.

MISS DAVENPORT, the Pulchritudinous and Unpoetic, began an engagement of seven nights and two matinées at Booth's Theatre on Saturday last. "As You Like It" was the opening play, and the accident to her inimitable nose will not interfere with her inimitable rendition of the parts of *Viola*, *Lady Gay Spanker*, and *Lady Teazle*, which constitute the week's bill.

FECHTER is playing a good "Monte Christo"-mas engagement at the Broadway Theatre.

"THE MAN OF SUCCESS" at the Union Square Theatre this week. What manner of success it achieved PUCK will tell next week.

SOTHERN changes his bill Wednesday evening, and plays in "David Garrick" and "A Regular Fix." The critic finds himself in the latter who tries to be at two openings on one night. The Union Square's and the Park's further comments must be postponed.

MISS ANNIE WAKEMAN has been engaged to support John S. Clarke in Philadelphia. She will play *Mrs. Swansdown* in "The Widow's Hunt."

HELLER the Incomprehensible is attracting lovers of the wonderful to the Fifth Avenue Hall where he holds magic levees, with magical levity. His mysterious entertainment is a source of great amusement, and it is needless to add—profit to the prestidigitateur. For further particulars inquire of Stanley Dust, manager, 24th Street and Broadway.

LOTTA talks of playing another engagement at the Park Theatre, and the friends of her histrionic heels talk of going to see her.

MODJESKA, the Countess Bozenta, opened at the 5th Ave. Theatre last Saturday night, in "Adrienne Lecouvreur."

In a republic even admirals ought not to be looked upon as anything better than marine police inspectors. They're paid by the people to do the same kind of duty—although they seceive, perhaps, a superior technical education for the purpose. PUCK won't allow these obstinate blue-coated, brass-buttoned, cocked-hatted, and bureaucratic old salts to give themselves ridiculous old-country airs, and to ride rough-shod either over subordinates or civilians. Discipline of course must be maintained, but there must be no such remarks as were made by that bloated old fossil Admiral Rogers, who at the "Huron" inquiry asked one of the unfortunate shipwrecked officers, who had lost his uniform and appeared before the court in citizen's clothes, what the deuce he meant by coming there in such a costume.

THE Baltimore *Every Saturday* doesn't credit. And our catarrhal sub-editor remarks ferociously: "Deb it!"

TO A BUTTERFLY.

(From the Philadelphia Times.)

Token of love and life, for one bright day
Thy dower of joy to last from sun to sun,
In full possession then to pass away,
Ending thy life as sweetly as begun.

Tis fitting that existence should be brief,
"Twould mar thy mission longer to remain,
Thou couldst not stay, unconscious of the grief
Which interlines life's record with its pain.

Even among the sunshine and the flowers
The shadows creep at closing of the day;
Thy birthright is a happiness of hours,
Accept thy portion—do not wish to stay.

So art thou spared in thy strange re-creation
Even the memory of departed pain;
And death is but a higher exaltation
That lifts thy wings to where thy joys remain.

SARA JEWETT.

Two Knaves and a Queen.

AN ENGLISH STORY.
BY FRANK BARRETT.

(This Story was begun in No. 4. Back Numbers can be obtained at the office of PUCK, 13 North William st.

(CONTINUED.)

"I may answer for my principal. He is not barbarous. A skillful *coup* shall decide."

"Par exemple, if I am first to draw blood, my adversary shall be considered disabled from fighting afterwards."

M. de Gaillefontaine's representative hesitated.

"If monsieur will not concede this point, my only alternative is the duel *a outrance*, since my object in fighting is to prevent the meeting with Mr. Biron."

The second withdrew, conferred with his principal, and, returning, said that M. de Gaillefontaine was satisfied to abide by a proof of superior skill; but that as a scratch frequently arose from accident, he must insist upon two wounds. He would forego his meeting with Mr. Biron in the event of being worsted in his first encounter.

René bowed; and they then marked the ground. M. de Gaillefontaine's second looked at his watch—

"We have yet five minutes."

"I am quite ready," said René.

The second retired to the group, and carefully took the cloak from his principal's shoulders. M. de Gaillefontaine looked upon his shirt, took the rapier, tried it in the air, and waited with the stateliest kind of composure for his second's word of command.

Meanwhile René, turning to Hugh with a smile, said, as she took the cloak from her shoulders:

"Hold this a while for me. I have a little affair with M. de Gaillefontaine that comes off before yours."

For a minute Hugh was silenced by astonishment, but when the motive of this quaint friend's action appeared to him, he stepped towards de Gaillefontaine's party, and said:

"I have at this moment and for the first time learnt that M. de Gaillefontaine proposes to fight my friend. I beg to object. I will fight M. de Gaillefontaine."

With a smile of superb contempt M. de Gaillefontaine said:

"All in good time, my esteemed sir. I will fight you at six o'clock, as arranged."

It was explained to Hugh, in a dozen ways by as many voices, that his objection was untenable. His meeting was for six o'clock, of which hour it yet wanted twenty minutes. He turned to René, who had already taken her ground. She had not removed her mask, and was rolling up the sleeve of her tunic. He implored, he remonstrated, he urged that her action was unjust to him; but all his arguments were of no avail; and now M. de Gaillefontaine was slowly, grandly advancing.

"Surely you will remove your mask," said Hugh; and his words were echoed by others, as René bowed.

"No; I will fight thus."

M. de Gaillefontaine, at these words, blanched, and his hand touched his sword-hilt infirmly. The superstition of his race was unradicated, and anything not to be understood was regarded as *diablerie*. Who was this foe that, in the garb of a youth, in the semblance of a woman, dared him to fight, and could afford to fight under the disadvantage of a mask and loose masquerade dress? Was it the avenging double of a forgotten victim? Would that mask presently drop away, revealing a face to paralyze his arm and expose his breast to the keen point of this as yet unknown?

CHAPTER XXXIX.

In skill with the sword de Gaillefontaine and René were fairly equal. René, constitutionally strong, vigorous, quick of perception, and resolute of purpose, had applied himself to the art of fencing at de Gaillefontaine's instigation, and had succeeded in it so well that her master was glad to discontinue his lessons. His pupil at that time had attained to a sufficient proficiency. She fenced as well as he; and further practice might disturb the nice equilibrium which should be sustained between pupil and master. Since those fencing lessons neither had handled a weapon, except when René took up the foil in Hugh's studio.

De Gaillefontaine had not admitted even to himself that René was his superior; such an admission with respect to any one or anything was impossible to one with so good an opinion of himself; and René did not overrate her own ability in thinking herself nearly as adroit as her instructor. Nevertheless, as they stood before each other now, the advantage was with René, notwithstanding her loose costume and the mask upon her face.

In the first place she knew, by her practice with de Gaillefontaine, which were his weakest guards, his most dangerous attacks; but a like knowledge, which had given him an occasional ascendancy over René upon former occasions, was useless to him now that her identity was concealed from him.

But he suffered from still greater disadvantage owing to his adversary's mask.

A swordsman's safety depends upon his sight as much as his dexterity. The expression of his opponent's eye tells him what attack to parry, what advantage to seize. René's eyes told M. de Gaillefontaine nothing; the mask entirely concealed their expression. He felt this disadvantage the moment their swords met. Through the piercings in the black-silk visor he saw nothing but devilish fire that dazzled his eyes and baffled his understanding. It took all his courage to meet that steady basilisk look; what to prepare for, what to do, he knew not.

René, detecting his weakness, made a pass which de Gaillefontaine barely attempted to parry, and at once pricked her adversary's sword arm above the elbow. They dropped their points. René shuddered as a little red patch made its appearance upon the white shirt-sleeve. Hugh stepped to her side as de Gaillefontaine's friends surrounded him.

"My dear fellow," said he, "throw away that cursed steel, and have done with this villainous folly. The man's got as much as he wants; leave him."

"To you? I might as well have risked nothing as to leave the work half done."

"Will nothing induce you to desist?"

"Will you promise me to slink out of your quarrel if I sneak out of mine? No, you won't, because this wonderful René's honor is concerned. Now, supposing that I value your life as much as you do this girl's honor, will any inducement make me forego my service to you? No."

De Gaillefontaine's sleeve was turned back, and his wound declared a trifle. He would gladly have had it more serious. He received advice from all sides, and was assured that his victory was certain against this foolhardy boy. Feeling how little he could depend upon himself, and galled by the advice and consolation for the wound, which all declared was accidental, the Gascon grew desperate at heart. "When you can't parry, thrust," recurred to his mind, and he took his place with the determination to attack boldly. René saw his intention before they crossed swords, although de Gaillefontaine avoided her eyes until the last moment. He lunged twice in rapid succession, but his point was turned in each instance. The eyes behind the mask showed nothing, neither of motive nor apprehension, but their steady gleam was insupportable. De Gaillefontaine blinked as though lightning flashed in his eyes, and, maddened by dread and passion, he shortened his rapier, and threw himself furiously against his adversary. With a rapid movement and a firm guard, René saved herself; but her point, again catching his sword-arm almost in the place of the previous wound, was driven through to the guard by the force of his impetuous lunge.

René shrieked with horror, and dropping her hand, tottered backwards, leaving her rapier in de Gaillefontaine's arm. The sight of his blood upon her hand stopped the swift beating of her heart; a strange humming noise in her head drowned the words she was conscious Hugh spoke to her; a cold clammy sweat broke out upon her face; a deadly sickness came over her; a confused vision of the gayly-costumed maskers drawing her rapier from de Gaillefontaine's arm, mingled with the look of hate and pain upon his features; the trees above her, and the face of Hugh livid with fear, whirled before her, and she lost consciousness. As Hugh caught the tottering Spaniard in his encircling arms, he became aware that the body he held was a woman's.

"Water, water!" he cried. "Quick!"

An Italian with a spirit-flask turned to assist, and advised Hugh to remove the mask. He remembered being told that the mask was fastened to the wig. Supporting René's head upon his knee, he took the wig by the edge, and lifted it. A loud cry of astonishment from Hugh and the Italian attracted attention, and de Gaillefontaine and the man supporting him moved towards the lesser group to discover the cause of surprise. The Spaniard wig and mask were upon the grass, and the mystery was solved. The blue-black hair had fallen down, released from confinement, and René's head was reduced to its natural proportions; and though the lower part of her face was disfigured with hair and smeared with moistened paint, she was at once recognized.

"La Regina!"

And now M. de Gaillefontaine was left to fare for himself, and all thought was bestowed upon René; but Hugh for very jealousy would let no hand touch her or administer to her recovery but his own.

He lifted the tall slight girl in his arms as if she were a child, resting her cheek in the hollow of his shoulder; and so he carried her slowly to the arbor, where the rugs were spread upon the seat. Whilst he thus bore her, her bosom heaved; a sigh coming from her lips

flooded Hugh with delight. He knew that she was living, who, body and soul, was ten times lovelier than his hopeful imagining had pictured her; and that she loved him.

Now was patient faith rewarded, and he possessed the joy which comes with the triumph of a forlorn hope.

CHAPTER XL.

LEFT to himself, M. de Gaillefontaine, after a moment's reflection, quitted the party noiselessly and as quickly as his exhaustion permitted. His wound had been bound tightly with handkerchiefs; and the hemorrhage stopped, it would take no hurt for a while. A more momentous matter called for despatch. He had expressed his intention of bolting, and to do so he must act immediately. In half an hour's time the servants would know of the revolution that had taken place, and the carriage to take him away would not be at his command. He had revealed to René his most sinister intentions, and had no hope of forgiveness from her. His affairs were too desperate to think of any resort save the safest, and that was to take his little bag of gold and notes out of the country whilst it was possible.

As he approached the theatre, he stopped to draw the cloak over his wounded arm, and slouch his hat. The ligature about his arm gave him pain; and as he was loosening the knot with his teeth and fingers, he felt a hand laid upon his shoulder. He turned in fear, and found himself faced by the woman in white velvet, whom he had mistaken for René.

"She raised her mask sufficiently for him to see the face of Beatrice Raffioli, as with a sardonic smile, and pointing to his bloody shirt, she asked:

"Do you love me *very* much?"

She replaced her mask, and with a light laugh rejoined a couple of men waiting for her at the angle formed by the path.

De Gaillefontaine clenched his teeth, and followed her quickly; at the angle he stopped and watched her cross the lawn and enter the theatre. She turned once and kissed her hand. The Gascon's rage and bitter thirst for revenge upon this woman, to whom he now attributed all his misfortunes, were too deep for the ordinary form of relief—cursing.

It was broad daylight; there was no time for delay, not even for revenge. He must hasten his departure, if only to avoid the derision and ridicule that would pursue him when his humiliation was no longer a secret. Ah, how those enemies would rejoice in his disgrace and defeat! Oh, that this venom in his heart would take the form of a deadly pestilence, and strike down every one of these revelling foes! With such bitter yearning in his soul he mounted the terrace, and made for the door of the house. Suddenly he stopped, inspired with an idea.

"Why shouldn't I, who raised this place, ruin it? he thought. "At least in my going I may show that I am great; no miserable thief stealing away, but a defeated king retiring from the palace I built and destroyed. Why not? It would divert attention from myself, and facilitate escape."

A pantaloons and an Irishman coming towards him decided him in adopting the suggestion of his evil genius.

"Well," said Mr. Fox, "have you decided? Will you buy this very troublesome piece of parchment?"

"Yes. We will settle our accounts this hour, and this parchment shall trouble neither of us any more. Follow me to where we may make our settlement privately."

"You go first, my friend," said Fox to his friend with the cudgel.

(To be continued.)



Puck's Exchanges.

THE ladies—they all jute. — *St Louis Journal*.

A PARADOX: Two physicians. — *Chicago Tribune*.

THE patent medicine almanac crop is fully ripe. — *Worcester Press*.

THE church choir singer's ditty—"We met by chants." — *N. Y. Commercial*.

THE Turk's contribution to the church is Allah money. — *Worcester Rewey*.

SONG of the oleomargarine men—"In the suet buy and buy." — *Boston Advertiser*.

DOES Conkling put his hair up in papers himself, or does he hire it done? — *Oil City Derrick*.

"Oh, the snow, the beautiful snow." Now, then, shoot, if you dare. — *Burlington Hawkeye*.

ALL Hale couldn't prevent Colorado Patterson from expressing his opinion. — *Worcester Press*.

ABOUT babies—generally a maiden aunt, and the good young man of the block. — *Pomeroy's Democrat*.

PETER B. SWEENEY has settled and has several millions left. It pays to be honest. — *Rochester Democrat*.

THE title of Farjeon's new novel is "Solomon Isaacs." Let's see; that's an Irish name, isn't it? — *Breakfast Table*.

THERE are highway robbers in North Carolina. They must be a Dick Turpentine sort of fellows. — *N. Y. Herald*.

THE *Boston Herald* refers to Dio Lewis as a man of "anti-mince-pie fame and bran-bread infamy." — *Worcester Press*?

THERE is a singular appropriateness in a man "hawking" spittoons around the country for sale. — *Norristown Herald*.

KANGAROO hides are largely imported from Australia. Chicago editors use them whole—for ear-muffs. — *Rewey Press*.

SNOBBERY is spreading slowly but surely in Cabinet circles. A man can't get foreign mission now unless he can spell. — *Boston Globe*.

THE Akhoond of Swat gets away with thirty-five cups of tea every day. 'Swat kind of a potentate he is. — *Worcester Press*.

EVEN the pliable and intrepid goat would hardly be able to go where a grocer's boy will drive his wagon. — *Worcester Rewey*.

A PHILADELPHIA "blind match peddler" is in jail for assaulting his wife. Alas, to many matches are blind. — *Worcester Rewey*.

"TWO-BITS worth of complexion," is the way the Santa Barbara belle puts it as she meanders into her favorite drug store. — *Stray Squib*.

RICHARD GRANT WHITE has been ill again. His disorder is thought to have come from an undigested adverb. — *Louisville Courier-Journal*.

IK. MARVEL's new book "About Old Story-Tellers," strange to say, makes no reference to Geo. Alfred Townsend. — *Philadelphia Bulletin*.

OLD gents whose dancing days were supposed to be over years ago, are now practicing the glide waltz, at snow balls. — *Union City Times*.

TWO three-year-old youngsters of Haddam shot at each other with revolvers. Their parents didn't ought to let 'em Haddam. — *Worcester Terror*.

It needs considerable moral courage for a man who is courting to map out and try to grow a pair of side whiskers. — *New Haven Union*.

At midnight in his guarded tent the Turk lay dreaming of the hour-i, was probably about the truth of the matter. — *Cincinnati Saturday Night*.

SEE here, isn't it rather curious that when Mr. Noah was in the preserving business he put up nothing but pairs? — *Bridgeport Standard*.

MR. SCHURZ, let us give you a bit of advice. For instance, an oyster broil is a good thing; but it needs some oysters in it. — *New York Herald*.

ANN ELIZA YOUNG is going through Massachusetts with her "Horrors of Mormonism," one of whom she is which. — *Louisville Courier-Journal*.

Now that it has come to the distribution of prizes to the babies some of the mothers naturally complain that they have had no show. — *Graphic*.

A STORE in Paris hires out children's toys by the week. The French always did take the lead in the matter of children's toy-lets. — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

THE man who has a pretty, scolding wife doesn't have any difficulty in understanding how a thing of beauty may be a jaw forever. — *Worcester Press*.

If the short man ever feels overcome with an intense desire to be tall, it is when he finds himself on the outside of a crowd at a dog-fight. — *Fulton Times*.

THE superfluity of moustache cups over moustaches convinces us that nature is either too slow, or manufacturers of cups are too ambitious. — *Fulton Times*.

MR. RALF has been shooting at Mr. Larkin, and has developed the fact that he is unreliable with a pistol. We trust he may improve. — *Baltimore Every Saturday*.

AMERICA now supplies Europe with beef, flour, apples, butter, cheese. Who says she may not claim the proud title of "the Fodderland?" — *N. Y. Com. Adv.*

THE average editor won't hang up his stocking; but will indulge in profitless regrets that he was so imprudent as to hang up his overcoat. — *Worcester Press*.

"MEN go by epochs in drinking whiskey," thinks the *New York Herald*. Does anybody remember any remarkable absence of epoch lately? — *Rochester Democrat*.

ARNOLD, the ink man, lives in a white house and drives white horses. He is bluff, jolly, 64, has a big income, and not a blot mars his happiness. — *Norristown Herald*.

OUR reporter at the cat-show says: "The genus tramp is not there. I asked several people to explain why, but no one could tell me 'ow it was." — *Brooklyn Union-Argus*.

THE *New York Herald* says that Gail Hamilton "never strikes twice in the same place." Good reason why; the place is gone after she has struck once. — *Rewey Presslet*.

GENERAL PIERSON, in his report of the Pittsburgh riots, says that he was not present when the firing began. He certainly was absent when it ended. — *Worcester Presslet*.

IF Senator Davis's parents had known what he was going to weigh, they wouldn't have been so stingy about piecing up a front name for him out of the family title. — *Phila. Bulletin*.

THE Homestead Fire Insurance Company of Watertown, N. Y., has—. But there is no use finishing the sentence; every one knows what it has done.—*Evening Telegram*.

WHEN the Indians left Washington the other day, Secretary Evarts warned them to put their money in their moccasins as they passed through Chicago.—*Detroit Free Press*.

THE bald-headed man is in great demand to act as judge at baby shows. We have always maintained that a way would ultimately be found to utilize him.—*Worcester Press*.

A FASHION journal says: "Overcoats will be worn much longer." We know of one old ulster that won't be worn much longer unless the image-man wears it.—*Dexter Smith's*.

AN ingenious chap has invented toy cows that "moo" and give milk; but they can't drag their tails on the untidy floor and then slash a fellow across the mouth.—*Rewey on Beef*.

THERE are a great many people who are anxious to stand by the President, and it would give them some courage if the President should take a notion to stand by himself.—*Phila. Times*.

IF this Spring-like weather continues much longer, Spotted Tail and his braves will return to Washington and ask to have their overcoats exchanged for linen dusters.—*Norristown Herald*.

FIND a man who has just seen his girl waltzing with another fellow, and in every case you will discover him to be an ardent admirer of Mrs. General Sherman.—*Louisville Sunday Argus*.

IF the good die young, and the wicked do not live out half their days, a golden mean between the extremes would seem to be a wise sanitary measure. We know people mean enough to live a thousand years.—*Rome Sentinel*.

A NEW Christmas slipper has been invented. It is to slipper ten-dollar gold piece in the hand of a deserving person on Christmas. N. B. We are always at home on that day.—*Whitehall Times*.

TENNESSEE expects to save \$11,500,000 by paying only half her debt. This will look so well that the next legislature may decide to save the other half. Economy is wealth.—*Lowell Courier*.

WHEN a young man is in the parlor alone with his girl on Sunday evening, and her mother comes in for an hour's chat, he is strenuously opposed to the "Third Party Movement."—*Norristown Herald*.

THE Chicago *Tribune* says: "One touch of nature make the nations kin." Yes, in Europe one touch of nature is making two nations skin each other with all reasonable dispatch.—*Brooklyn Union-Argus*.

"WHAT is this feeling of vague uneasiness—this haunting something that restlessly pervades my breast?" tragically inquires the New York *Ledger* heroine. We know what it is; it is dyspepsia.—*Rockland Courier*.

A BABY has been born in Salem, Alabama, with a back-bone so much longer than is necessary that it can wag the end of in. Mr. Darwin! Mr. Darwin! Hi, there; quick, Mr. Darwin!!!—*Burlington Hawkeye*.

"EVERY drop bran'y I drank paid duty, midear." "Well, what of it?" said his wife, as she pulled off his boots. "Then midear, ain't I a (hic) duty-full husband?" She concluded that he was.—*Cin. Sat. Night*.

Break, break, break,
On thy doctored books, O bank,
Let the brazen cheek of the President fled
Tell how the securities shrank!

—Graphic.

THE late Senator Morton was an advocate of woman suffrage. He also believed that if a woman is bent upon jumping into a bramble bush she ought to be permitted to jump.—*Andrews's Bazar*.

DORE, the French artist, is at work on a picture entitled "Death Stifling the Poet with Palm Leaves." If he is a spring-time poet we trust Death will not run out of leaves until he completes the job.—*Oil City Derrick*.

AN Orange county man who only stole three mink-skins has been sent to jail for thirty days. This is otter inhumanity.—*N. Y. Com. Adv.* Yes; if he was sable to pay a fine, he shouldn't have been sent up.—*Norristown Herald*.

EVERY girl who expects to give the young minister a present for Christmas is now working a chrome blue portrait of Judge Davis in navy yellow beads on a sky green slipper, with an ultra-marine red instep.—*New York Herald*.

A MEDICAL journal says all poison bottles should be distinguished by some glaring peculiarity. The man who is in the habit of keeping a private "poison bottle" will not echo this suggestion.—*Turner's Falls Reporter*.

IT is when a dry goods clerk of ninety-seven pounds weight, attempts to help from a farm wagon a farmer's wife of 203 pounds weight, that the reporter seats himself contentedly on the curbstone and waits for the catastrophe.—*Rome Sentinel*.

A BURLINGTON, VT., man has a cat four years old that weighs twenty-three pounds. When the animal rehearses for an evening concert, the neighbors evolve oaths which weigh more than the cat. This is reliable, if true.—*Norristown Herald*.

MANY clergymen do not yet know where their winter overcoats are to come from, but they feel a sweet and solemn faith that they will get seventeen pairs of slippers each about Christmas time, and that none of them will fit.—*Rome Sentinel*.

AN exchange has an article entitled, "How to Break up Setting Hens," and explains a very good way; but it doesn't afford so much food for contemplation as to let out the job to a woman who prides herself on her executive ability.—*Worcester Press*.

SILK stockings should be washed in cold water with white soap, rinsed in cold water, laid flat on a fine towel, rolled tightly until dry, and rubbed with a piece of flannel to restore the gloss.—*P.I.-Man*. Don't forget to take them off, first.—*Phil. Bulletin*.

EGGS are hatched by electricity. This method may be very expeditious and all that sort of thing; but the warm, beaming smile of Schuyler Colfax is a safer agent, if the temperament of the chickens produced is to be taken into consideration.—*Worcester Press*.

THE coldest storm wave of the season was experienced by a young man from Syracuse, who escorted an East Rome girl home Sunday night, and was detected by her father just as he was putting his moustache where it would do her the most good.—*Rome Sentinel*.

THE prevalence of dwarfs and otherwise deformed people in Genoa is ascribed by a correspondent to the narrowness, crookedness and darkness of the streets; but this theory doesn't tally with the conspicuously stately appearance of the Boston school-girls.—*Worcester Press*.

THE editor of the Worcester *Press* knows what constitutes marriage. He says it is "getting down to one cigar a day in order to pour money into the coffers of the man who sells striped stockings." We are puzzled at this definition. Who pays for the cigar?—*Rochester Democrat*.

REV. MATTHEW HALE SMITH says that "the Bible is chock full of wit from Genesis to Revelation." That's so. Take, for instance, where father-in-law Laban played it on Jacob in a way that the latter despaired.—*New York Commercial*.

A MASSACHUSETTS clergyman, who prayed last Sunday for the present Congress, offered among other petitions the following: "O Lord, give them common sense." This preacher apparently is one of those who refused to believe that the age of miracles is past.—*Philadelphia Bulletin*.

A FAIRFIELD turkey walked into the house Thanksgiving morning, swallowed a \$20 bill that the man of the house dropped on the carpet, all rolled up in a wad, and with a wild gobble of amazement ran off into the pathless forest to await the passage of the silver bill.—*Burlington Hawkeye*.

THE color of a girl's hair is regulated by the size of her father's pocket-book. If the latter be plethoric, the girl's tresses are golden or auburn. If the old man's wallet is lean, we hear the daughter spoken of only as "that red-headed gal." You never saw a rich girl with red hair.—*St. Louis Journal*.

THE city editor of an Auburn, N. Y., newspaper remained at his desk till 5:15 in the afternoon, went out and put on a boiled shirt, attended his own wedding and was on board the New York express at 6:40. This is the first recorded instance where a city editor was able to find an hour and twenty-five minutes' leisure.—*Rewey's Worcesterer Yet*.

A NEWSPAPER says Boston has a colored man named Yale College. When he shall have a large family, imagine Mr. College standing on the front porch and yelling to her offspring: "Now, see heah, Dartmouf, how many times mus' yo' po' mudder tell you ter frow dat base ball 'way an' stay in de house an' larn yo A. B. Cs? Cornell, quit dabblin' in dat watah, an' come heah dis instan'! You ac' like a fisherman. An' you, Vassar, yo' de wors' out ob yo' mouf, or I'll choke yo' till yo're black in de face."—*Derrick*.

PUCK has a conscientious scissors man who manages to get the choicest gobs out of his exchanges. By the way—it may do his wearied soul some little good to know that in his occasional clippings from this column he gets hold of the squibs which produce the most demoniacal grin on the countenance of the wretched mortal who invents them.—*Too-modest-by-half Paragapher of the Worcester Press*.

IT is said that the age of superstition is passed, but there are yet a great many women who wouldn't have a dress cut on Friday for the world.—*Ex*. What the dear creatures most hanker after is a Weddin's day dress.—*Phil. Bulletin*. The proper time for proposals, however, is Choose-day.—*Cin. Saturday Night*. But the proudest day in their lives is their first son-day.—*Whitehall Times*. It is Thirst-day every day in the week for us.—*Involuntary Comment by one of Puck's staff*.

TWO Indian boys live by robbery, and they are just in their teens. These two hearts rob as one.—*P. I.-man*. What careless botchery of a possible pun! A slight lisp would make it perfect. Thus, "Theeth two hearth rob ath one." It is as easy to do these things rightly.—*Phil. Bulletin*. But when our esteemed contemporary, the Philadelphia *Bulletin*, does a thing like the above oughtn't it to italicize? We are not the daftest of the daft, but five minutes, eternally wasted, have slid down into the caves of oblivion. The play on the word throb did dawn on us at last, but, hang it, that isn't even the right quotation. Oh, why did we reprint this thing anyhow?—ED. PUCK.

THE *World* says the phrase "A Merry Christmas" is only a corruption of "A Myrrhy Christmas," alluding to the offerings of Myrrh. Very likely. And probably "A Happy New Year" is only a corruption of "A Hoppy New Year," alluding to the offerings of Beer.—*N. Y. Graphic*.

PATTERSON used to be a newspaper man. O scissors!—*P. I. Man*. That explains a thing that has been worrying us. If Patterson belongs to the Sisera family, we can understand his natural aversion to going to Jael.—*Philadelphia Bulletin*. We can hardly "credit" it.—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. No, you couldn't "credit" anything. However, Patterson proved a foeman worthy of your steal, for that paragraph was stolen from the *Norristown Herald*.—*Cour. Journal*. No 'twasn't, nuther! Belonged right here.—*Philadelphia Bulletin*. It paste to get these things right.

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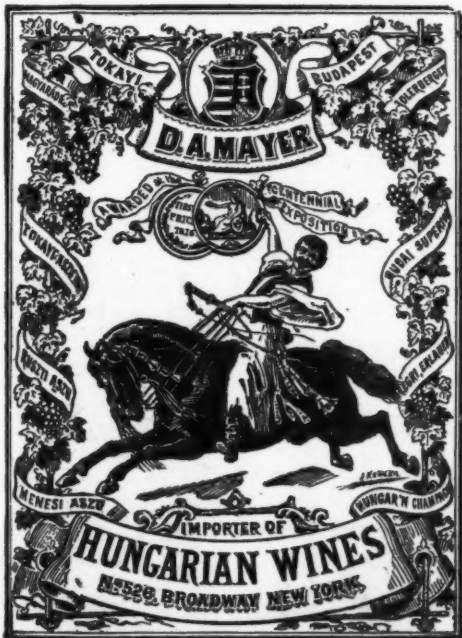
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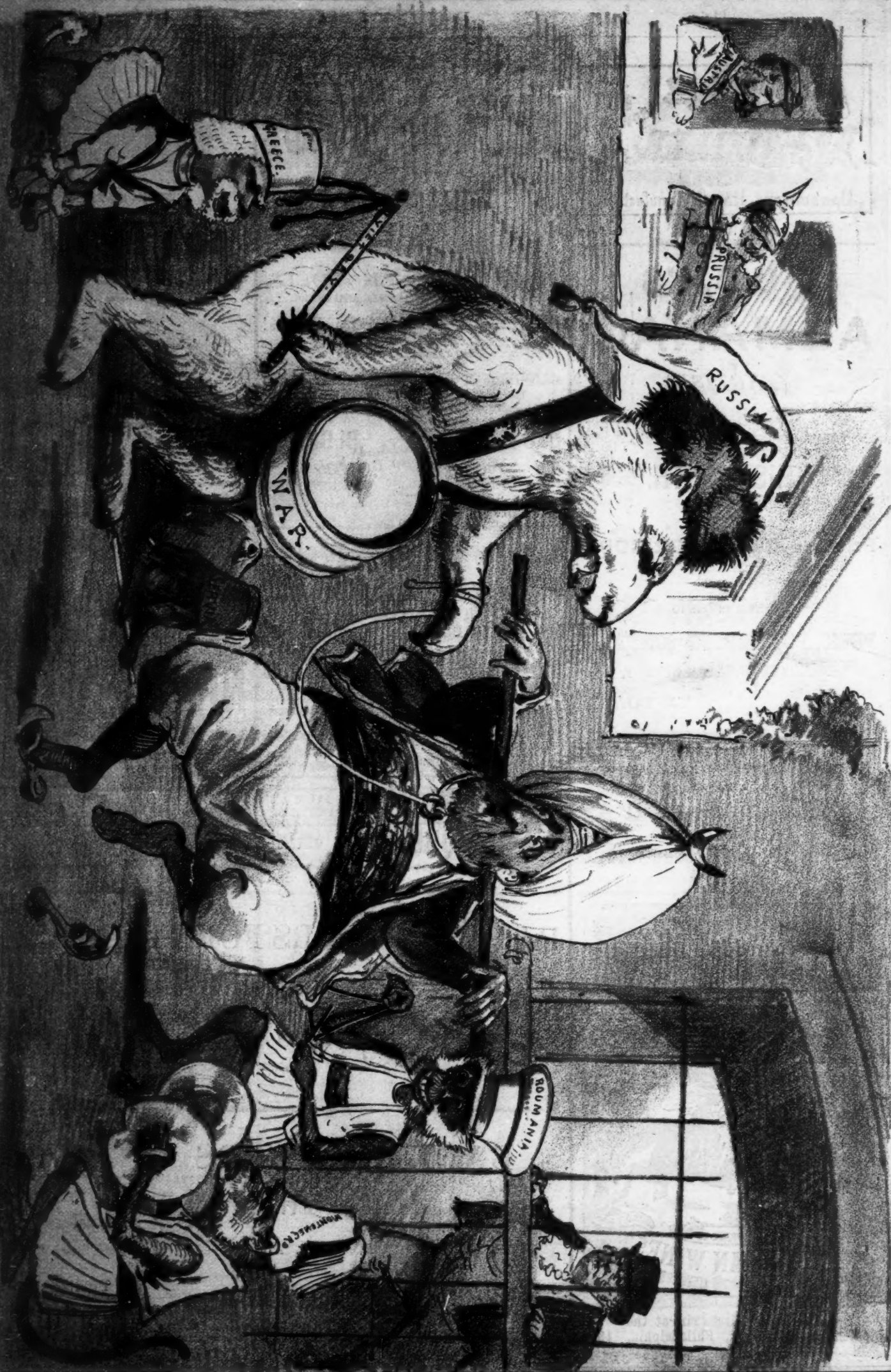
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